

(Refer to paragraph (a) of this section should the approval official for the action determine that an EIS is necessary.) Additionally, all applicable consultation and coordination procedures required by law or regulation will be initiated with the appropriate Federal or State agency(s). Such procedures will be accomplished in the most expeditious manner possible and modified to the extent necessary and mutually agreeable between FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 and the affected agency(s). The provisions of this paragraph are limited to the same emergency circumstances and scope of action as specified in paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 1940.333 Applicability to planning assistance.

The award of FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 funds for the purpose of providing technical assistance or planning assistance will not be subject to any environmental review. However, applicants will be expected to consider in the development of their plans and to generally document within their plans:

- (a) The existing environmental quality and the important environmental factors within the planning area, and
- (b) The potential environmental impacts on the planning area of the plan as well as the alternative planning strategies that were reviewed.

§ 1940.334 Direct participation of State Agencies in the preparation of FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 EISs.

FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 may be assisted by a State Agency in the preparation of an EIS subject to the conditions indicated below. At no time, however, is FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 relieved of its responsibilities for the scope, objectivity, and content of the entire statement of any other responsibility under NEPA.

- (a) The FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 applicant for financial assistance is a State Agency having statewide jurisdiction and responsibility for the proposed action;

- (b) FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 furnishes guidance to the State Agency as to the scope and content of the impact statement and participates in the preparation;

- (c) FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 independently evaluates the statement and rectifies any major deficiencies prior to its circulation by the Agency as an EIS;

- (d) FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 provides, early in the planning stages of the project, notification to and solicits the views of any land management entity (State or Federal Agency responsible for the management or control of public lands) concerning any portion of the project and its alternatives which may have significant impacts upon such land management entities; and

- (e) If there is any disagreement on the impacts addressed by the review process outlined in paragraph (d) of this section, FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 prepares a written assessment of these impacts and the views of the land management entities for incorporation into the draft impact statement.

§ 1940.335 Environmental review of FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 proposals for legislation.

- (a) As stated in § 1940.312(d)(4) of this subpart, all FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 proposals for legislation will receive an environmental assessment. The definition of such a proposal is contained in § 1508.17 of the CEQ regulations.

- (b) The environmental assessment and, when necessary, the EIS will be prepared by the responsible Agency staff that is developing the legislation.

- (c) If an EIS is required, it will be prepared according to the requirements of § 1506.8 of the CEQ Regulations.

§ 1940.336 Contracting for professional services.

- (a) Assistance from outside experts and professionals can be secured for the purpose of completing EIS, assessments, or portions of them. Such assistance will be secured according to

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the Federal and Agriculture Procurement Regulations contained in chapters 1 and 4 of title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) The contractor will be selected by FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354 in consultation with any cooperating agencies. In order to avoid any conflict of interest, contractors competing for the work will be required to execute a disclosure statement specifying that they have no financial or other interest in the outcome of the project.

(c) The Administrator will provide the State Director with a proposed scope of work for use in securing such professional services.

(d) Applicants will not be required to pay the costs of these professional services.

§§ 1940.337–1940.349 [Reserved]

§ 1940.350 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

The collection of information requirements in this regulation has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget and has been assigned OMB control number 0575–0094.

EXHIBIT A TO SUBPART G OF PART 1940— DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION

Number: 9500–3.

Subject: Land Use Policy.

Date: March 22, 1983.

OPI: Land Use Staff, Soil Conservation Service.

SECTION

1. Purpose
2. Cancellation
3. Policy
4. Abbreviations
5. Definitions
6. Responsibilities
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1. PURPOSE

The Nation's farmlands, forest lands, rangelands, flood plains, and wetlands are unique natural resources providing food, fiber, wood, and water necessary for the continued welfare of the people of the United States and protection from floods. Each year, large amounts of these lands are converted to other uses. Continued conversion of the Nation's farmlands, forest lands, and rangelands may impair the ability of the United States to produce sufficient food, fiber, and wood to meet domestic needs and

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the demands of export markets. Continued conversion of the Nation's wetlands may reduce the availability of adequate supplies of suitable-quality water, indigenous wildlife species, and the productive capacity of the Nation's fisheries. Continued encroachments on flood plains decrease the natural flood-control capacity of these land areas, create needs for expensive manmade flood-control measures and disaster-relief activities, and endanger both lives and property.

Land use allocation decisions are matters of concern to USDA. Decisions concerning land use arise from needs to accommodate needed growth and development; prevent unwarranted and costly sprawl; avoid unwarranted conversion of farm, range, and forest lands and wetlands from existing uses and unwarranted encroachment on flood plains; maintain and enhance agricultural and forest production capabilities; maintain wildlife, fish, and seafood habitat; provide or improve community services and facilities; assure appropriate environmental quality; and assure adequate supplies of suitable-quality water. These needs are highly interdependent and often compete with each other for the limited supply of available land and water.

It is Departmental policy to promote land use objectives responsive to current and long-term economic, social, and environmental needs. This policy recognizes the rights and responsibilities of State and local governments for regulating the uses of land under their jurisdiction. It also reflects the Department's responsibility to (a) assure that the United States retains a farm, range, and forest land base sufficient to produce adequate supplies, at reasonable production costs of high-quality food, fiber, wood, and other agricultural products that may be needed; (b) assist individual landholders and State and local governments in defining and meeting needs for growth and development in such ways that the most productive farm, range, and forest lands are protected from unwarranted conversion to other uses; and (c) assure appropriate levels of environmental quality.

In accordance with the authority contained in 7 U.S.C. 1010 and 7 U.S.C. 2204 and consistent with 7 CFR 2.19(f) and provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act, Subtitle I, Title XV, Pub. L. 97–98, the Department sets forth this statement of policy on land use.

2. CANCELLATIONS

This regulation supersedes Secretary's Memorandum 9500–2 dated March 10, 1982.

3. POLICY

Federal agencies, in implementing programs, make decisions that affect current